preparedness is far too inadequate and wanting, as compared to our neighbours;

(b) if so, the reasons for showing laxity in proper defence planning and to bring our defence preparedness comparable to neighbouring countries; and

(c) whether the Standing Committee of the Parliament, in its latest report, has also criticised Government for this?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Standing Committee on Defence in its Second Report, 1998, made a reference to the defence preparedness in the context of according a high priority to the defence sector and privision of adequate budgetary/allocations in 1998-99. The recommendation was conveyed to the Ministry of Finance in 1998 for its consideration.

Accident rate in IAF

1571. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA': Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that accident rate in IAF is going high;

(b) whether any study was commissioned by Air Headquarters in this regard;

(c) if so, what are its main findings; and

(d) whether Government propose to act on its finding?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) There has been decline in the accident rate in the IAF. As per the available statistics, the accident rate in respect of Category-I accident has come down from 1.01 in 1995-96 to 0.71 in 1998-99, (till February' 1999). No study has been commissioned by Air Hqrs in this regard in the last three years. However, a High Powered Committee on Fighter Aircraft Accidents (COFAA) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri to analyse the causes of the accidents which submitted its report in September, 1997. It has made certain recommendations to minimise accident rate. Implementation of these recommendations would involve changes in organisational structure, procedures, training, design, technology etc. Necessary instructions have been issued to the agencies/ Departments concerned to take suitable action in terms of the recommendations of the Committee.

Cases for denial of promotions in three services

1572. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 164 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th February, 1999 and state whether Government made study into
this problem of increasing number of cases, field by officers of three services against denial
of promotions during the last three years, for redressal of the grievances?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Information regarding all court cases on service matters filed by the Services personnel and pending in various courts during the last 3 years was given in reply to the Unstarred Q. No. 164. Court cases on denial of promotion form only one part of the figures referred to therein.

No formal study has been conducted in this regard.

Action against Gujarat Government

1573. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report "Home Secretary faces a barrage of queries", appearing in the Statesman dated February 4, 1999;

(b) if so, whether the Home Secretary stated that everything short of dismissing the Gujarat Government, had been done; and

(c) if so, the action taken against the Gujarat Government so far and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During his visit to the USA, the Home Secretary was asked a number of questions on the reported attacks on Christians and their

institutions in Gujarat and other parts of the country. While answering these questions, the Home Secretary gave details of the action taken by the Central and State Governments to avoid recurrence of such incidents in future.

(c) A Central Team was deputed to Gujarat to interact with senior State Government functionaries in connection with the situation arising out of the reported attacks on Christians and their institutions and to ascertain the steps taken by the State authorities to control the situation. The Central Team recommended several confidence building measures to defuse the situation and to ensure communal harmony. Based on the report of the Central Team, appropriate instructions were issued.

Threat by Ranvir Sena

1574. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the so-called Ranvir Sena of Bihar, while brazenly taking responsibility of the recent Bihar massacres, in February, 1999, had again threatened to carry out further massacres; and

(b) if so, the steps since taken to apprehans the culprits and the success achieved in these efforts?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Some reports in this regard have come to notice.

(b) 18 activities of the Ranvir Sena have been arrested since 13.2.1999.

Funds for Border Road Development

1575. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTA CHARJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government provide funds under Border Road Development to Assam Government for construction of roads;

(b) if so, whether the Centre monitor funds utilisation allotted to States since Assam Government diverted the funds to other projects coming under State programmes;

(c) how much money was allotted during the last two years to Assam Government under the programme; and

(d) how much money was spent on roads, particularly in sothern part of Assam known as Barak Valley having international border with Bangladesh, giving the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Technical Committee under the Director General (Works), Central Public Works Department and a High Level Empowered Committee under the Chairmanship of Union Home Secretary regularly monitor the progress of works and utilisation of funds under the Indo-Bangladesh Border Works Project.

(c) Rs. 1,200 lakhs and Rs. 760 lakhs were released to Government of Assam for construction of border roads and fence in 1996-97 and 1997-98 respectively.

(d) An amount of Rs. 6997 lakhs released upto 31.3.1998 has been spent on construction of order roads (including bridges) in Dhubri, Karimganj and Cachar districts of Assam.

ISI activities in India

1576. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of ISI activities in India like its link with Madarsas in border areas (Hindustan Times, 16.5.1998); smuggling of counterfiet 500 Rupees notes (Business Standard, 25.5.1998); its infiltration in Armed Forces (Pioneer, 7.12.1998); its role in Mumbai Serial Blasts (Times of India, 4.9.1997); its role in Mumbai Serial Blasts (Times of India, 4.9. 1997); its activities in West Bengal (Observer, 10.12.1998) and Hyderbad (Indian Express, 10.7.1998); and

(b) what action is proposed to be taken in all these matters?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware that ISI of Pakistan is involved in aiding, abetting and supporting terrorism in various parts of the country. Available information indicates that this agency has been supporting and financing